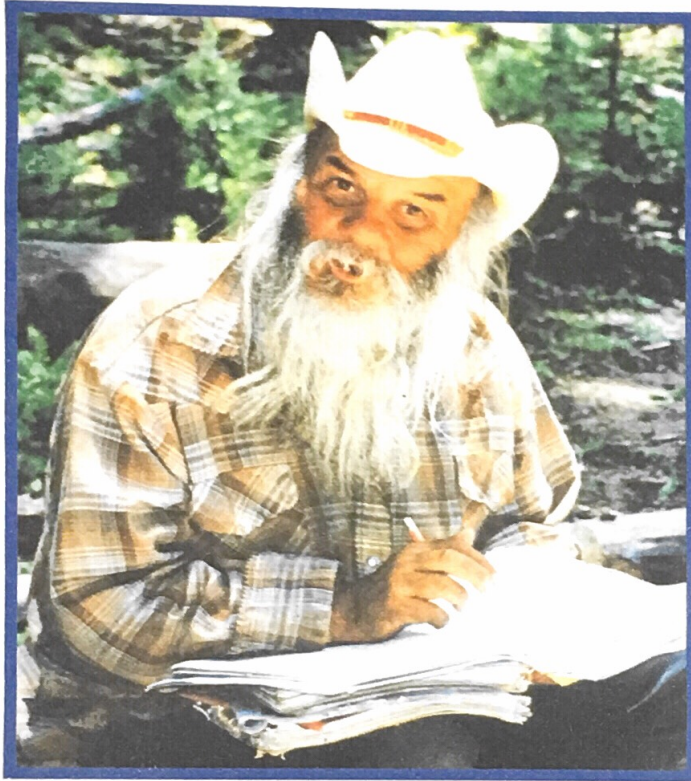


Rainbow Family

Life Stories



by Jodey Bateman.
Interviews with Rainbow
Family of Living Light
folks conducted between
1977 and 2008.

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09.H PEANUT - "I Wasn't Afraid"
(with comment by Phil Coyote)
- interviewed in 1978 and 1979

6 pages

[09.H]

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PEANUT-(with comment by Phil Coyote) "I Wasn't Afraid"

[I regret very much the lack of life stories of STP women. Peanut was not in STP herself, but she lived with STP Bear from the time he became deeply involved with Rainbow until his death in 1979.

Since Peanut gave me this account in 1978, she also gave me in 1979 a page or two more, which I lost along the road. All I remember of her later material is one sentence.]

PEANUT-

I was born in Adak, Alaska, in 1958. I have not yet made my nineteenth birthday. My father was in the Navy for 20 years. He was a chief petty officer. My mother was just a mother. We moved around a whole lot when I was a child.

My father left the Navy when I was about six. We kept moving. My father worked for Montgomery Ward's as a service manager for appliances. I went to a whole bunch of schools. Not many friends. I didn't see many relatives. I left school the same time I left home. I was 13. I couldn't be as free as I wanted to be. I was smoking pot at home. Of course my parents objected. I had to say where I was going all the time. We were living in Gulfport, Mississippi. I hitched to New Orleans. I wasn't afraid. It was all right. I was just hanging out on the streets. I've been provided for ever since I left home in a very nice manner.

When I was 14, I hitched to Colorado and got arrested and sent back. I got put in a detention home in Mississippi for six months. I ran away from there. It wasn't bad. I just didn't want to be there. I haven't seen my parents since then. I called them when my daughter was born and I called them when I came back from Guatemala. That's all.

The same day I split from that place in Mississippi, I went to New Orleans and met Bear. He was with the Rainbow Family. We hung out in New Orleans for a month and then we went to Arkansas to help start the 1975 Gathering. Arkansas was insane. The police gave us a lot of problems all the time. It was mellow at Ebby's farm. I took off for Fayetteville just to go to town while Bear went to see about a lake for the gathering place.

Then I went to Clarksville, Arkansas, and hung out with the Apple Annie bus folks for a while. They was picking peaches except there wasn't too many peaches to pick. I just hung out. I hitch hiked back to Ebby's and then we all went looking for the gathering site. Me and Chuck Wind Song and Bear went into the sheriff's office and told him we were going to have the gathering in his county and there wasn't too much he could do anyhow. He wasn't too much he could do anyhow. He wasn't too happy about it. Then we went to the gathering. I was in town getting medical supplies for the gathering when the shots and the arrests happened.

I think the Arkansas Gathering was the best one of all the gatherings I've been to. It was little, so I could get to know people. I think this one in Oregon may be as good. Me and Bear went to Ebby's after the gathering and got golden seal and ginseng, which we bought at a country store, and we took it to Minnesota, selling it and trading it for stuff and then we to Montana to help with setting up the gathering there.

We went back to Arkansas and an old friend of Bear's gave us a pickup truck and Jimmer came and the three of us headed for Mexico. We never made it there. We got as far as Padre Island, Texas. I got pregnant there. We tried to sell the truck there to get some more money but the title hadn't come

back for the pickup, so we couldn't sell it.

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So we got in the pickup and rode to Tucson and ran into a bunch of family there. We went to the Desert House, which is outside of Tucson. All the people from Flowering Tree were there. Dinner went onto the Christmas, '75 Gathering in Florida.

The Desert House was a little adobe house - no running water or nothing. I don't know who owned it - some fellow who had gone to Israel. There was no running water. We had to haul it from a store. There was a bunch of tipis, a bunch of folks and a whole lot of good food from the Tucson Trash.

We left cause the police had stopped us on the road and we got real funny vibes from them and the police eventually ran everybody else out. Me and Bear and Kilo just jumped in the pickup and went to Faywood Hot Springs in southern New Mexico by Deming. We lived there for about four months. We lived on a hustle, however we could make it. Selling and trading rocks to rock hounds, selling jewelry we made to tourists, getting food stamps because I was pregnant.

I was 16, but I wasn't scared being pregnant. That was just the way it was. Then we went to Montana. We were some of the first people there for the gathering. We lived up in the woods with Freedom and Lee Anne and Tony Angel and Joe McGinty - camping out at the Cave Mountain campground. On June 15th, everybody showed up at Cave Mountain in the middle of the night. Two days later we had a gathering site after council with the Forest Service. It was a shitty gathering - just a junk piece of land that they gave us. Montana was an all right gathering. I didn't like it too much because I was pregnant.

Then me and Bear and Kilo and Marsha left on a school bus with a brother from Albion, California. There was a bunch of people on the bus besides us. We went to Seattle. Then Kilo split, then Bear split. It had been a crazy ride - that's all.

Me and Marsha went to Oregon to Eugene. We met Bear there and the same day I met a lady named Blackberry Ruth who took me home to her house to have my baby. I hung out there for a month and had my daughter Sarah. I had a three hour labor. It was real quick and real easy.

I went to Eugene and met Bear and me and him went to Flowering Tree Commune. We stayed there for two months, then went to the Barter Fair in the neighborhood. We didn't get anything. It was just a party for me. Then we went to the Love Family and lived there for the winter. It was bizarre. We left because of Logic of the Love Family farm.

The Love family had meetings at four in the morning and I had missed the meeting. It was five and I was going out to take a piss, and Logic started jumping on my shit about Bear. He said if I wanted to stay with the Love Family any more, I had to stop paying special attention to Bear and I couldn't sleep with Bear any more. It made me mad. Me and Bear left that morning and went to Eugene where there was Phil, Crazy John and Buckwheat and the Apple Annie bus. Buckwheat and Apple Annie were on their way to Texas and Crazy John had just gotten all his back crazy money, about \$1,000 and Phil had just gotten a \$1,000 inheritance. It got real crazy. We were eating steaks and drinking beer and smoking marijuana and Bear was running the Love Family rap on everyone out of the Bible, driving us all crazy.

We were there for a month. Then we got Bear's mama to buy us bus tickets to Eden, Arizona for the spring, 1977 Healing Gathering. It was real crazy, all the power trips, like it always is. Then we went to Jay Sun and Feather's at Luna. Bear helped Jay Sun on a thinning contract. We

stayed there about a month - and then the New Mexico Gathering.

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We went to Wall Lake by the gathering site in New Mexico. We ran into Kilo and Marsha in Apple Annie with their new baby Zeke. A couple days later, May 15, we went to the gathering parking lot. The Rangers told us we couldn't be there. We said, "Fuck you, we're gonna stay there anyhow."

The New Mexico Gathering was pretty crazy. I spent the whole gathering running the parking lot in Apple Annie, fighting with Bear...

[After the 1978 Oregon Gathering, Peanut and Bear spent a while in Guatemala. Then...]

... This spring, 1979, has been very heavy...

COMMENT BY PHIL COYOTE - 1979

This spring Bear died of spinal meningitis. It took 30 days. It was a long, painful, bad death. It started with a nasal infection but it was really a fight between the light and the dark halves of himself. I know that's so. I know things like that. He tried to be good. Every gathering, he wanted to change, but he just got confused from all the different trips. He really wanted to come to this Arizona Gathering. It would probably have been the last gathering he went to. He was getting burned out.

Peanut and Kilo were with him when he died. He had been getting well. Then the doctors came and asked him how much money he was ready to pay. They stuck a tube in his neck and said "Breathe!" and he pulled out the tube. Kilo tried to push his spirit back in his body.

He had a wake. They really partied. There was a live rock band. People didn't get sober for a month. I had a lock of Bear's hair, but I burnt it. I don't want to have a dead person's hair.

Wherever he's gone, he'll be back soon. He didn't want to go.

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[Peanut gave birth to another child by Bear in the spring of 1979. At the Arizona Gathering that summer there was a sweat lodge ceremony for Bear's spirit.]